

1 Candidate Information

Candidate Name: **Greg Larson**
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Website: www.Larson4SantaCruz.com
(I was a late entrant, so my website goes live next week)

2 What office do you seek to be elected to?

City of Santa Cruz City Council

3 Please choose the option best describing your candidacy:

Open Seat

4 Do you identify as LGBTIQ?

I strive to be a LGBTIQ ally!

Is there anything else about your identity that you'd like us to know?

I have not only strived to be a LGBTIQ ally, but I have done so for 40 years!

5 Are you a member of the GLBT Alliance?

YES, I am currently a member (but I just joined today)

6 Please describe your qualifications for the elected position you seek. Include your main issues, priorities if elected, key endorsements, plus anything else that you'd like our members to know about you and your candidacy.

Greg Larson for Santa Cruz City Council.

Values we share. Experience we need.

First, I am a lifelong progressive with a history of courageously fighting for what I believe in.

- * Youth representative to McGovern for President statewide steering committee
- * Fought for divestment from South Africa as Stanford student body co-president
- * Walked first picket lines for SEIU and UFW in the late 70's, and dozens since
- * Managed 13 statewide, congressional and local Democratic campaigns winning 85%
- * Ran State Controller Steve Westly's successful 2002 campaign against Tom McClintock
- * Led recent successful petitions for increased mental health funding & health care access
- * Currently Chair the Coastal Watershed Council, embracing our City's environmental center

Second, I am the candidate with the most local government experience.

- * Former City Manager of Los Gatos and Milpitas and Deputy City Manager of San Jose
- * Created and led San Jose's renowned Department of Environmental Services
- * Launched the Santa Cruz Climate Change Action Program
- * Served as San Jose Mayor's Budget Director and Chief of Staff

- * **Planning & Community Development Director for both Santa Cruz and Scottsdale**
- * **Seasoned problem solver and consultant for over 30 cities, counties and special districts.**

Third, the most important City issues for me in this campaign include the following:

- * **Affordable housing & homelessness – I have managed these issues elsewhere for years**
- * **Public safety, broadly defined – I have directly supervised police, fire and other City staff**
- * **The coming fiscal crisis – I have balanced a dozen City budgets without layoffs**
- * **Creating good jobs here at home – I have supported both local businesses & high tech**

Fourth, I will attack these issues the same way I have every challenge I have faced:

- * **With courage, the foundation of all values, for without it, all else fails;**
- * **With inclusion and engagement, because the more involved the better the outcome;**
- * **With creativity, since the challenges ahead demand new solutions; and**
- * **With compassion and collaboration – we are all in this together.**

LAST, VIABILITY OF A CANDIDACY MUST MATTER FOR YOUR ENDORSEMENT.

I have been endorsed by:

Supervisors Ryan Coonerty and Zach Friend.

Mayor David Terrazas and former Mayors Hilary Bryant, Cynthia Mathews, and Mike Rotkin.

BAYMEC Co-founder Ken Yeager.

Former Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Fred Keeley.

Former State Controller Steve Westly.

And dozens of progressive and community leaders throughout Santa Cruz and the State.

7 Why are you seeking the endorsement of Santa Cruz County's grassroots LGBTIQ political organization, the GLBT Alliance?

I would be honored to have your endorsement and disappointed if I don't receive it, given my long history of not only support, but leadership as well, as described in the next question.

Nonetheless, I understand the challenge you must face, with two strong lesbian candidates and an incumbent who is herself a continuing ally. All I ask is that you consider recognizing that there are four strong candidates with a LGBTIQ history worthy of support.

8 Please tell us about any past or current experiences or involvement you've had addressing LGBTIQ issues or work you've done to support the LGBTIQ community.

One of the proudest moments of my career was being surprised as a BAYMEC "HERO" at the annual dinner in 2002. I received this award for having fought discrimination against the LGBTIQ community when I was President/CEO of United Way Silicon Valley. Even though I was an Eagle Scout, as the media always reported, I defunded the Boy Scouts because of its unwillingness at that time to sign our required pledge of non-discrimination. The hate mail

and attacks I suffered as a result paled in comparison to knowing that I had done what was right.

However, my support of LGBTIQ emerged long before and remained after:

- * I was elected Stanford student body co-president on a progressive platform that included an explicit call for Gay Rights, in 1977!!!
- * All of the candidates and campaigns I supported were leaders in supporting LGBTIQ rights at that time.
- * I supervised the tragic demise of the first employee at the City of San Jose who died of the horrific AIDS virus.
- * Six former staff members have become city managers in themselves, and one is a lesbian who is city manager of a large city in the East Bay.
- * Last Summer, long before I knew I would be running for City Council, I “translated” a Unitarian church service reading from the “binary” to the “non-binary,” to make it more accessible to all, just as we do for ancient Greek texts.
- * I am so proud my then 12 year old daughter immediately joined both the Feminist Coalition and the Gay/Straight Alliance at her new school.

9 What historic political or civil rights struggles are you familiar with that impact LGBTIQ equality?

All civil rights struggles share the same history and needs of inclusion, respect, and advocacy by public allies who support their inclusion and access to equal rights.

10 What is your philosophy about working with minority communities of which you are not a member, and how will this manifest in your future work with the LGBTIQ community?

Being a white male born long ago, I have faced this issue through out my life. Nonetheless, I have successfully crossed boundaries throughout my personal, political and professional career.

**I championed the rights and needs of workers, when I was only a student.
I worked tirelessly for the first viable Black candidate for Governor in California.
I managed the campaign for the first Asian American Congressman from the continental U.S.
I served as city manager for the first Asian-majority city in Northern California.
I fought the Boy Scout's historic discrimination, even though I was an Eagle Scout.**

All of this was based from a place of learning and listening, compassion and courage.

11 Please describe any programs you know of that impact the LGBTIQ community and that are governed by or funded through the elected office you are running for? Include any suggestions you may have for improving these programs.

The City must support financially and with public leadership the emerging civil rights issue of our day and age, which is for the transgender and Gender Queer community.

12 If elected, how would you use your position to help further issues of importance to the LGBTIQ community?

I will always be there, as I always have been.